

The Journal

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Thursday, January 2, 1997

50 cents (Tax included)

Garbage rates set to rise

By Dawn Frasier

EL CERRITO—January's garbage bills will be 44 cents higher than last quarter's for single can customers. Residential garbage rates are rising 11 cents per can per month beginning Jan. 1.

Four-month garbage rates for single can (32 gallon) customers will increase from \$66.92 to \$67.36; mini-can customers will now pay \$0.76 for the trimester. Multi-can

According to city manager Gary Pokorny, garbage rates in El Cerrito remain the lowest in West County.

Customers will also pay 11 cents more per can per month. Commercial customers will pay a direct \$0.39 per ton or an equivalent increase.

The increased payment will contribute toward increased costs of \$0.39 per ton at the West County Integrated Resource Recovery Facility. The "tipping rate" covers the cost of processing, transporting and disposing of solid waste, as well as program and operating costs of the West County Joint Powers Agency.

The tipping rate is established annually by the JPA board and may be imposed with no public hearing by any of the city councils involved.

According to city manager Gary Pokorny, garbage rates in El Cerrito remain the lowest in West County. Compared to Richmond, for example, El Cerrito rates are about \$3 lower per can per month.

In addition, a new curbside green waste program, complementing the ongoing residential recycling program, will begin March 31, with no increase for collection services expected until January of 1998.

East Bay Sanitary has not asked for a rate increase for local collection in 2-1/2 years. According to Pokorny, the company will absorb this year's contract wage increases by an offsetting reduction in their legal expenses "now that all their intra-family lawsuits between and among the owners have been settled."

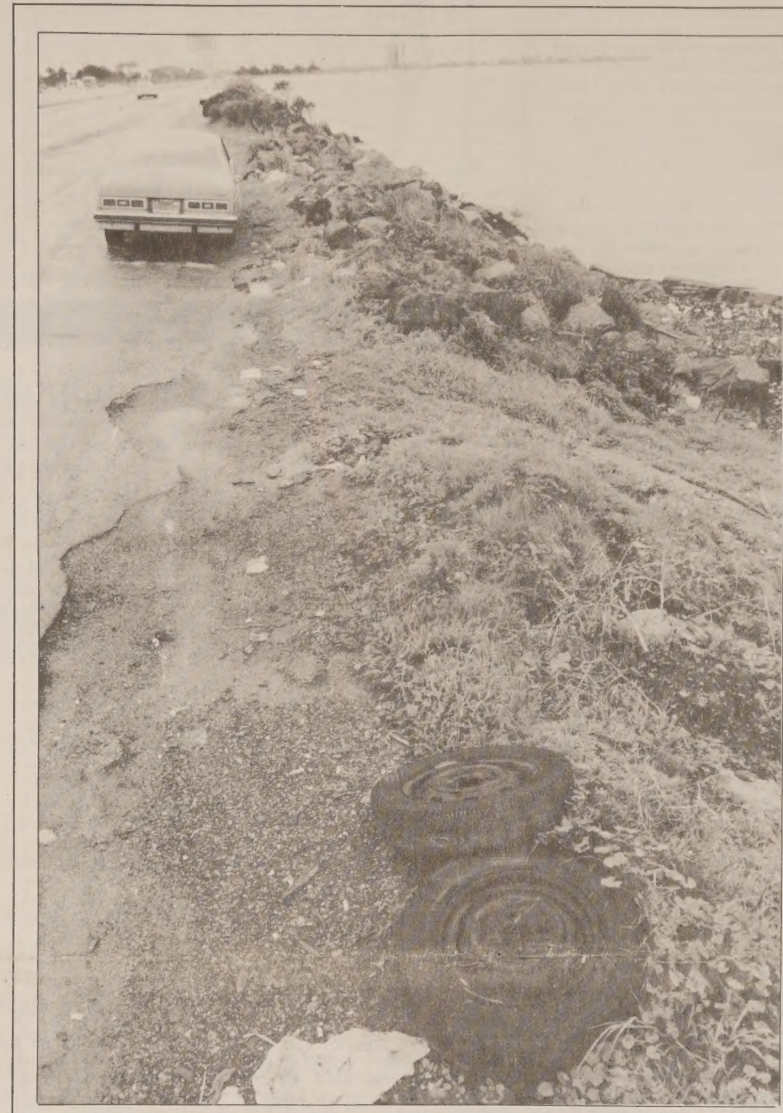
EC official looks at upcoming budget

By Dawn Frasier

EL CERRITO—Mid-year budget figures will not be available to the El Cerrito City Council until its February meeting, administrative services manager Jim Randall said Monday. Though the budget may be "more significant than most," he expects no earth-shaking figures, despite the results of the November election.

With sales tax revenues down following the close of the Emporium and other city revenues threatened by the passage of Proposition 13, some department heads have said they are waiting to plan for next year until they see how this year's budget has been affected. For months, Randall has been saying that "the outcome of the election in November, (with the passage of Prop. 13 and the defeat of Measure H) won't affect this fiscal year very much." He still believes that's the case.

"Most things affecting the city



The new park will extend from the Richmond shoreline to Emeryville

Mike Fietson

Eastshore State Park approved

By Greg Hugunin

EAST BAY—The 20-year dream of an Eastshore State Park has been given a significant nudge down the road to completion.

A cautious optimism descended upon park advocates last week in the wake of a tentative agreement between the East Bay Regional Park District and Catellus Corp. to purchase approximately 700 acres of shoreline between Emeryville and the Albany/Richmond border. That optimism grew Monday, when the state Public Works Board approved \$25 million worth of bond money for the purchase.

The champagne corks aren't popping quite yet, however, as some negotiating remains as to who will pay to clean up portions of the area laced with toxic contaminants.

"It's a little early for the real story," said Rosemary Cameron, the district's assistant general manager of public affairs, adding she was "very hopeful" as to the deal being completed within a month or so.

According to a letter from Pat O'Brien, the district's general manager, to the director of the state Department of Parks and Recreation, "acceptable terms" have been reached in negotiations for the nine-mile stretch of shoreline. Although final details have yet to be worked out, "It is our understanding that the general terms and conditions and process for completing this action are acceptable to Catellus, East Bay Regional Park District and the State of California," the letter states.

The deal, for \$13 million less than the \$38 million Catellus asked for last year, would allow the park district to purchase portions of

'I'm planning on jogging on it, running on it, and playing ball with my grandchildren on it.'

—FORMER ASSEMBLYMAN
TOM BATES

shoreline running from the Emeryville Crescent to just north of the Golden Gate Fields Racetrack in Albany, and convert the area into a nature-oriented park. The park would be transfixed by the Bay Trail, and would include restored wetlands, meadows and be slanted toward "passive" use.

Among the portions of land to be purchased, all of which are former landfills, are the North Basin strip in Berkeley, land surrounding the Emeryville Crescent, and the "neck" and "plateau" areas in Albany north of the racetrack. The deal will be funded by a pair of voter-approved bond issues totaling \$40 million from the late 1980s.

"This really is the biggest step in 20 years toward assuring the shoreline will be open to the public," Dwight Steele, chair of the Citizens for Eastshore State Park (CESP), said Monday. Steele pointed to the 37-acre North Basin portion in Berkeley, a grassy meadow which he said Catellus planned to sell for commercial development, as an

See PARK, page 8

Albany mayor ponders use of new political power

By Greg Hugunin

ALBANY—Although he has spent the last two years casting what have essentially been token "no" votes, when the next chapter in the cardroom hearings takes place on Monday, Mayor Bob Good will end up wielding something he says he never wanted—power.

With the City Council split 3-2 against City Attorney Robert Zweben's recommendation to waive the "drop dead date" in the development agreement authorizing a cardroom at Golden Gate Fields, it looks as if Good, who cast the sole vote against placing the project on the ballot in 1994, will

have a bit more say this time around as to whether the cardroom lives or dies. While emotions run high and letters attempting to persuade council members arrive by the handful, a talk with Good last week revealed that this stage of the game will be played under different guidelines: Robert's Rules of Order.

"Suddenly I'm in a position of power," said Good, who was re-elected in November along with first-time council members Jon Ely and Peggy Thomsen, both of whom are publicly-declared cardroom

opponents who opposed Zweben's recommendation. "It's a burden."

Although voting "no" was almost a tradition for Good during the reign of the previous, Mike Brodsky-lead council, he opposed,

The second hearing will be held Monday, Jan. 6, at 8 p.m. at City Hall.

among other things, the cardroom, the removal of Bill Cain from the Planning Commission, Brodsky's second term as mayor, the Villa Motel project, and all but two of the six council-sponsored measures on

the November ballot.

With the council declaring its opposition to informally amending the development agreement at a hearing two weeks ago, attorneys for the city and Ladbroke Racing Corp. will meet with Good this week to search for another solution to the increasingly-complicated matter.

While Good opposed waiving the deadline, he has expressed support for invoking a clause in the agreement allowing a permitted delay due to the two-year-old lawsuit filed by the Citizens for Responsible

Government.

As is usual for the ongoing cardroom battle, however, attorneys for CRG and the city are at odds as to the legality and effectiveness of such a move. Opponents are also saying that public support for the project has waned since it passed by a 187-vote margin in 1994.

"My sense is that the popular sentiment has turned against it," said CRG attorney Bob Outis, echoing many other cardroom opponents who say that the cardroom would not stand a chance of passing if it were put to a vote now.

Also at stake, Zweben said, is

See CARDROOM, page 8

Be prepared for the new year

By Dawn Frasier

EL CERRITO—Looking for a significant resolution to make for the upcoming New Year? Pat Cafel and Joan Gallegos would encourage you to consider organizing your household—and maybe even your neighborhood—to be ready for emergencies. Both serve as volunteer coordinators for Neighborhood Emergency Assistance Teams in El Cerrito and Kensington, respectively. The program offers information, training and support for effective preparation.

"We emphasize emergency preparedness for any disaster," said Cafel. "I think if we have some awareness as individuals, as households and as neighborhoods, we can withstand anything that happens, whether an earthquake, which can be very serious,

a wildfire, as happened in the Oakland hills, even flooding."

Cafel noted that, during last winter's flooding, one of the affected neighborhoods had already been organized.

"Even in that situation, it helped," she said. "They knew each other and had some training."

NEAT is a program run by the El Cerrito Fire Department which provides fire services for both El Cerrito and Kensington. Cafel said she works with fire chief Steve Cutright and fire marshal Mark Scott but most closely with captain Doug Brown on emergency planning. Together, Cafel, Gallegos, Scott and five neighborhood captains perform a steering committee for the program. Cafel also acts as liaison to the city's Crime Prevention Committee, working with chair Lloyd Jung on issues of preparation for crime prevention.

Neighborhoods are organized with captains, co-captains and six committees divided by task.

"Experience shows that, in a disaster, professionals are overwhelmed," said Cafel. "We need to be self-sufficient neighborhoods for at least 72 hours."

In order to ensure that the community is so prepared, the NEAT program emphasizes three main goals.

Be informed. That can start out simple—just getting to know neighbors, through block parties and yard sales (which generate funds for supplies). Knowing what resources are available in the neighborhood (medical personnel, generators, four-wheel drives) is also key, along with identifying any special problems and needs.

See NEAT, page 8

See BUDGET, page 8

■ Letters to the Editor

A safer corner

Editor:
I want to express my gratitude to those responsible for placing the bumps that ensure drivers do not cut corners short as they make a right-angle turn. Each time I came uphill through the corner of Westminster and Kenyon, I wondered, "Is this the time I get killed?" Drivers coming down hill irrevocably took their half of the road in the middle.
Grace Hamilton Manov

No place for vendettas

Editor:
A note to newly-elected Council Member Jon Ely: You were elected by a majority of citizens to represent them, regardless of your personal vendettas. It was also a majority who voted for the card room.
Russell Solomon
Albany

Albany schools in crisis

Editor:
I attended the parent orientation nights at my children's schools recently and was moved by what I saw and heard from their teachers. Being a teacher myself, I am perhaps a harsh critic of the work of my peers. At the same time, I have a personal understanding of the enormity of the challenges teachers face daily in their chosen field. I was very impressed with the professionalism, the humanness and the integrity of these teachers. They are highly skilled and dedicated professionals.
My heart was heavy when I left school those evenings. Strange I should feel disheartened when my children's teachers far exceeded my highest expectations. The sadness I felt then and still feel compels me to write this letter. I realize I have an obligation as a parent and as a member of a democratic society to share my concerns in a public forum. I do not do this lightly or comfortably.
We are in a crisis in the Albany public school system. This is an all too familiar scenario, teachers struggling for fair and equitable compensation for the work that they do. What does that say about us as a society? It says to me that we (including our government representatives) do not value our children's education enough to treat their teachers with the dignity they so rightfully deserve. You can have a classroom filled with state of the art teaching materials and technology, yet without a skilled educator in there to facilitate the learning process, all of it has very little educational value for our children. What message do we give our children about the value of their education? I think it is important to give serious thought to these questions.
It concerns me that we, the community this system serves, tolerate this situation. We all have to make priority lists in our lives knowing that we may well not get to the bottom of the list. Why aren't pay increases for staff a priority budget concern? The way it seems to be handled now, everything else is considered first and what is left over in the budget is what is offered to teachers. We know that given the state priority for educational funds that there is little left over, if any. What do you think that does to the morale of the teachers working with our children every day? I am sure the school board and administrators feel they are doing the right thing for our children in the way they handle this budget issue. I am certain they are not. Please contact school board members and let them know your thoughts on this. They serve us and our children.
So does the group in Sacramento. Why doesn't their fiscal priority list reflect the level of importance that our children's education deserves? The way things run now we will continue to fight among ourselves (teachers, administrators, parents, community members) over the crumbs Sacramento throws our way to educate our children. This takes the attention away from the policy makers and their accountability to us, the people they represent. Let's handle this current local crisis with speed and the respect it deserves. Then I would like to see all of us stand together and send a message loud and clear to Sacramento that we are not happy with the manner in which they are setting up their priority list. Demand that they put education nearer the top or we will find someone who will. That is what democracy is all about. We have that power. We only need to exercise it.
Eileen McKenzie

Editor:
Last month *The Journal* printed our letter expressing appreciation to the merchants and

individuals who underwrote the Albany Education Foundation's Ice Cream Social in September. We neglected to include Bears and Baubles and Flowerland Nursery among those who made cash and in-kind gifts, and thereby secured the success of our fund-raiser.
We would like to recognize these merchants who are helping keep Albany's schools strong.
Bev and David Farrell,
Co-chairs
Ice Cream Social
Planning Committee

Don't allow intimidation

Editor:
Ladbroke's latest gambit to win an upper hand in the casino battle is disgraceful. After spending \$350,000 on Measure F and \$650,000 on legal fees defending it, Ladbroke now appears eager to spend even more money on litigation. They have begun personal attacks on our city officials. They have hired a high-priced attorney from Los Angeles to accuse Council Member Jon Ely of a conflict of interest—in spite of the fact that he was elected, in part, because of his opposition to the casino! And as we all know, if one spends enough money, one can always find an attorney to find something wrong.
Ladbroke's threat to Council Member Ely is wrong.
Of course, it's Ladbroke's right to sue council members if they want to, but it is a despicable attempt to stifle a duly-elected official. This kind of "big bucks bullying" has to stop—it's unfair, unwarranted, and unAlbany. We need to tell Ladbroke to play by the same rules everyone else does, despite their access to huge sums of money. If Ladbroke won't conduct their affairs civilly, then they should take their business elsewhere.
Citizens have a right to elect who they want without having to worry that some unhappy developer will sue their duly-elected officials. Ladbroke should send their attorney back to Los Angeles—Jon Ely is above reproach and he's here to stay. It's becoming clear that the price Albany has to pay for Ladbroke's business is too high. Ladbroke doesn't own Albany and they shouldn't be allowed to intimidate us. This is especially so when an honest public official has the community's best interest at heart.
An attorney told me Ladbroke's desperate threat against Mr. Ely might be a SLAPP (Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation). He lives in Albany and didn't charge me anything.
Jerri Holan
Albany

Let agreement expire

Editor:
I have written letters to the Albany City Council, asking its members on Dec. 16 to not extend the cardroom development agreement and to uphold the Feb. 1, 1997 sunset clause approved by voters.
The city and its residents were provided with both inadequate and misleading information by Ladbroke prior to the cardroom vote. Ladbroke did not inform Albany residents that it held the major interest in a San Pablo cardroom to be constructed.
What is the possibility that Ladbroke will build a 100- to 150-table cardroom in Albany, since it already owns and operates a 60-table cardroom in San Pablo? Unlikely. It is more plausible Ladbroke will propose an Albany casino, if casino gambling is permitted in California, which would have a substantially greater effect on Albany and has not been reviewed as part of any environmental or financial review.
Albany only will receive limited benefits from the proposed cardroom, and will be in even worse shape if a casino is built. As part of the negotiated development and disposition agreement, cardroom operators only are required to provide the city with up to \$1.2 million a year in revenue from 100 to 150 tables. Yet, in San Pablo, where there are 60 card tables, the Ladbroke-owned Casino San Pablo has pumped \$3.4 million in casino cash into the city budget this year, as reported by the *West County Times*.
Any development proposal for the shoreline should be scrutinized for the benefits that will accrue to the city and its residents. Any development and disposition agreement should be prepared by a third party consultant with experience in such land use agreements—consultants who could be recommended to Albany's city administrators by members of the Alameda County City Managers' Association who have dealt with such consultants in recent years.
Ralph Holzmeister, Albany



■ Police Reports

Group robs couple at gunpoint in Albany

By K. Osborn

ALBANY — At about 11:30 p.m. on Dec. 28 a young woman on the 800 block of Pomona Avenue reported that while she and her boyfriend were walking along the BART tracks near Masonic and Washington avenues they were approached by a group of seven Asian males, one was armed with a handgun and wearing a visor. The group stole the boyfriend's radio and the young woman's purse then departed. Police are investigating.
On the evening of Dec. 22 a resident on the 1000 block of Talbot Avenue reported that thieves had stolen the left rear tire from her 1988 Volkswagen sometime over the weekend. There were no witnesses.
On the afternoon of Dec. 23 a Richmond woman reported that while at a service station/mini mart on the 1000 block of San Pablo Avenue a man hit her gray Chevrolet Lumina, which was a rental car, causing minor damage, then drove away. While officers were taking the report the man called the Albany police station and reported his involvement in the incident. He came down to the station and was cited for vehicle code violation.
On the evening of Dec. 23 Albany officers observed a man who appeared to be behaving erratically near the area of San Pablo and Portland avenues. He was contacted and

found to be from Emeryville and very intoxicated. He was arrested to be released when sober.
At about 2 a.m. on Dec. 24 Albany officers observed a woman leaving the Salvation Army parking lot. She was contacted and a check revealed she had two outstanding warrants from Alameda totaling \$10,500 for forgery and receiving stolen property. She was arrested.
On the afternoon of Dec. 24 Albany officers responded to reports of noisy teens on the 700 block of Kains Avenue. They found an Albany boy who had hit an Albany girl causing a bloody nose. When contacted the boy was found to be in possession of stolen property. He was arrested for battery and possessing stolen property.
On the evening of Dec. 24 the owner of a book store on the 1800 block of Solano Avenue reported that a thief had just stolen items from his store. The thief departed west bound on Solano Avenue on a bike.
Just after midnight on Dec. 25 Albany officers responded to a 911 call at a residence on the 1200 block of Solano Avenue and found a violent domestic dispute in progress. One member of the family was arrested for being intoxicated to be released when sober.
On the afternoon of Dec. 25 the manager of a restaurant on the 600 block of San Pablo Avenue reported

being hit by a customer. The tacker was described as a black 5-foot tall, weighing about 150 pounds, with long black hair wearing a dark blue top. He left foot before officers arrived.
On the morning of Dec. 29 Albany officers located a Chrysler La Baron on the 400 block of El Cerrito Avenue which had been reported stolen out of San Pablo. It was taken and the owner notified.
On the morning of Dec. 29 a resident on the 900 block of Talbot Street reported that thieves had stolen the rear license plate from a car. There were no witnesses.
At about 2 a.m. on Dec. 29 Albany officers contacted a resident from Berkeley near the intersection of Madison Street and Solano Avenue who was known to have an outstanding warrant from Albany for forgery in the amount of \$5,000. He was arrested.
During the week of Dec. 29 Albany officers fingerprinted people at their request, towed cars, responded to 25 false alarms, intervened in seven domestic disputes, attended to five lost or injured animals, assisted two people who were locked out of their homes or cars, rescued one child who was locked in a car seat, and responded to three reports of barking dogs. Albany firefighter/paramedics responded to four fire calls and medical emergencies.

EC man robbed at bank ATM machine

By Dawn Frasier

EL CERRITO — An El Cerrito man was robbed at the American Savings ATM Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. The robber had a semi-automatic weapon and demanded the victim's watch and cash. The suspect is described as a black male in his 30's, 5-feet, 11-inches tall, 150 pounds, wearing a green pullover sweatshirt with hood and a goatee.
Blockbuster Video was robbed Dec. 13 at 11:17 p.m. The thief displayed a handgun, demanded and received cash, then fled. The suspect is described as a black male, 25 to 30 years of age, 5-feet, 10-inches tall, 180 to 200 pounds, wearing a black coat, black jeans and black cap.
In a second incident, a Blockbuster Video employee has been arrested for making a false report of an armed robbery at 8:37 a.m. Dec. 16.
Detective Dennis Danielson also said that a man accused of robbing Blockbuster Video Nov. 26 and Little Caesar's Pizza Nov. 16 has been arrested in Alameda County on those and other charges.
Kragen Auto Parts was robbed at 6:32 p.m. Dec. 16. The suspect showed a semi-automatic pistol and demanded cash. He was described as a black male in his 20s, 5-feet, 8-inches tall, 200 pounds, wearing a tan jacket, white tank top and dark pants, a tan baseball cap with a dark bill, and sunglasses.
The PetVet/petfood store was robbed two minutes earlier at 6:30 p.m. Dec. 16. The suspects brandished weapons, demanded and received cash, and fled on foot.
The first is described as a black male, 5-feet, 4-inches tall, 130 pounds, wearing a long black Raiders

jacket, a Raiders knit hat, black pants and silver-framed, mirrored sunglasses. The second is described as a Pacific Islands male, 5-feet, 2-inches tall, 160 pounds, wearing a black jacket with brown sleeves, a dark baseball cap, dark pants and brown-framed, mirrored sunglasses.
An unlocked garage was entered in the 2900 block of San Mateo Avenue during the night of Dec. 16. The bottom floor of an apartment was entered through the garage. A bike and miscellaneous items were taken.
An unsecured bike was taken from a driveway in the 2600 block of Tuller Avenue between 4 p.m. and 4:20 p.m. Dec. 15.
A laundry room was burglarized in the 1700 block of Liberty Street during the daytime Dec. 14. Coins were taken from a machine.
The Women's Therapy Center was burglarized during the night of Dec. 12. A window was smashed for entry, offices were ransacked, and cash was taken.
Two unsuccessful vehicle thefts were reported. The window of a 1984 Olds Cutlass was smashed for entry in the 900 block of Ashbury Avenue during the night of Dec. 17. The thief took miscellaneous property from the car after attempting to steal it.
An attempt to hotwire a 1983 Olds Cutlass in the 1200 block of Richmond Street was also unsuccessful. The incident occurred between

tween Dec. 13 and 16.
Two other property thefts from vehicles were reported. Three backpacks were taken from a car parked at El Cerrito Plaza on the afternoon of Dec. 20. A cellular phone was stolen from a vehicle parked Lexington Avenue carport (between Dec. 13 and Dec. 20).
Someone scratched a vehicle with an unknown object in the 1100 block of San Pablo Avenue on the afternoon of Dec. 16.
A Berkeley man was arrested for possession of methamphetamine after a traffic stop on Potrero and Eastshore Boulevard at 12:30 a.m. Dec. 17. Also arrested for possession of methamphetamine were two Richmond men Dec. 15 at 1 a.m. (San Pablo and Plumas) and a Hayward woman Dec. 20 at 1:55 a.m. (San Pablo and Portola).
An arrest was made for possession of marijuana for transport sale in the 10600 block of San Pablo Avenue Dec. 22 at 2:51 a.m.
An El Cerrito male juvenile was arrested for writing in wet cement on the sidewalk at Central Richmond at 3:27 p.m. Dec. 17.
An arrest was made for driving under the influence at San Pablo and Potrero Dec. 18 at 12:25 a.m.
Shoplifting arrests were made at Safeway (a Pittsburg woman) and at Payless (a Richmond man).
There were two incidents of domestic violence reported.

The Journal

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Happy New Year
from the staff at The Journal

West County School Watch

By Glen Price

Building the Alliance for Public Education

"These conditions can be changed," said Maria Teresa Viramontes, "if we all work together and make a commitment to peace in our communities." Viramontes' call to action came as part of her keynote address to the Alliance for Public Education forum on "Creating Safe Environments for Teaching and Learning" held Dec. 14 at Wilson Elementary School in Richmond. For me, her words also illustrated the underlying belief motivating the founding of the Alliance.

More than 100 people from throughout West County gathered to listen to a group of panelists and share their own concerns and proposals. The event was the first in a series of public forums being organized by the Alliance around key issues affecting public education.

In addition to Viramontes, who is executive director of the East

Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership, panelists at the first Alliance forum included 14th District Assemblywoman Dion Aroner; Tom Bertera, WCCUSD School Security Officer; Maria Lemus Hollands, parent at Mira Vista Elementary School; Lana Martarella, Teacher at Richmond High School; Marco Gonzales, Lincoln Elementary School principal; and Ben Murdoch, North Richmond Neighborhood House. Mark Friedman, acting president of the Alliance, convened and facilitated the event.

Viramontes centered her keynote remarks around three statistics: homicide is the leading cause of death for those aged 5 to 21; guns are the weapons of choice in these homicides; and the leading times for violent crimes against youth are (in order) 3 to 6 p.m., 12 to 1 p.m., and 8 to 9 a.m. The ten-point "Youth Violence Initiative" being

pursued by the East Bay Public Safety Partnership includes several efforts designed to address head-on youth safety during the heaviest time period for violent crime.

One of these is "Safe Passage Home" which seeks to guarantee the physical safety of students on their way to and from school. To implement "Safe Passage Home," the East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership is seeking the voluntary assistance of students, churches and neighborhood volunteers.

The East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership is also actively pursuing the implementation of "Extended Day" school sites. Building on the tremendous success achieved in the cities of New York and, more recently, San Francisco, the extended day program seeks to utilize school sites during non-school hours for a variety of programs designed to address both

student and community needs and problems.

Several of the panelists stressed the need for increased attention and support for conflict resolution programs for students at every level. Gonzales and Murdoch both drew the link between violent activity in school and the violent environment children are growing up in. Panelists and speakers from the floor also connected low educational performance with safety and violence issues. As Murdoch said, "Kids not able to read and do math will act out when they are called upon...to arrive at solutions we have to involve youth in everything we do...solutions won't work without the participation of each of us."

Responding to issues raised from the floor, Assemblywoman Dion Aroner noted that Governor Wilson may propose extending the current class size reduction program through grade 5. "The good news is that state revenues are up which will likely mean new

dollars going to education," Aroner said, "but the class size reduction program has brought with it several problems including the fact that school districts are not being fully funded for the amount of the program and that many have an acute lack of space. In solving one problem another has been created. At some school sites child care programs are being asked to leave to make room for class size reduction at precisely the time when we should be increasing the enrollment in afterschool child care."

Mark Friedman concluded at the end of the seminar, "The alliance will be working to help the community come together. This issue touches every area of our schools and communities. If we continue to come together we can come up with solutions."

The Alliance for Public Education forum series is part of a broad-based effort to build increased grass-roots community support for schools. The next Alliance for Public Education

forum will be on the topic of "A Middle School for Richmond." It will be held Saturday, March 1, at Wilson Elementary School in Richmond from 1 to 3 p.m. The forums are not necessarily about engaging school officials in dialogue about what is right and wrong with our schools, but about how we as a community can organize to guarantee quality schools for our children and youth.

The power to build a strong base of community support for our schools is within our hands. Let's all resolve in 1997 to build schools and neighborhoods where the children of West County are safe and can learn and achieve to their full potential. On that note, let me wish to one and all a very Happy New Year!

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- Residents: Wednesday, January 8 thru Tuesday, January 14, on your regular recycling day, or any week on your plant debris day.
- Apartment: If you don't know your neighborhood's recycling day, call 527-5555.
- Business Districts: Tuesday, December 31.

Please note:

- Remove stands and all decorations.
- Flocked trees cannot be recycled - put them with your trash.
- Trees over 6 feet tall should be trimmed to 6 feet, or brought to a drop-off box.

Drop-off boxes will be available December 26 to January 31st at two sites:

- Corner of Dwight Way/Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Transfer station, 1201 Second Street, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Mon. - Sat.

(Drop-off sites will be closed New Year's Day)

Trees will be made into compost and mulch.

For more information, call the City of Berkeley Recycling Program 644-8856

Goings on About Town

Events, meetings, classes...

Albany YMCA, 921 Kains, \$3. 547-6355 or 769-9759. Fridays: dancing to music from Balkans, Greece, Israel. Lessons from 8—9 p.m. \$3. Dance from 9—11 p.m.

Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave. 848-3533 or 845-4725. Jan. 3: Edwin A. Skeels will give a lecture on "The Free Speech Movement and Its Effects on Berkeley Today" at the noon luncheon.

Berkeley Community Chorus and Orchestra is beginning rehearsals at 7 p.m. on Jan. 6 and will continue every Monday night from 7 to 10 p.m. in preparation for three public concerts. There are no auditions, previous experience is not necessary, and special help is available for beginners. Rehearsals take place at St. Ambrose Church, 1145 Gilman St. at Cornell. 528-2145.

Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1606 Bonita St. (at Cedar), 841-4824. Jan. 5: Howard Thurman: His Challenge for Today, with speaker, Jerry De Jong. Children's Program: childcare for toddlers; classes for preschool through junior high. 526-0972.

Berkeley Hiking Club, Jan. 5: Tomales Bluff. 548-0129. Mini Hike in Walnut Creek. 934-0458.

Berkeley Public Library, 2090 Kittredge at Shattuck Ave. 644-6100. Jan. 2: Rubber Stamp Extravaganza at 2 p.m.

Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center, 1414 Walnut St. 848-0237. "My Family's Routes and Roots" will be on display through Jan. 26, 1997. Ext. 118.

North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst/MLK Jr. Way. 644-6107. Jan. 2: Video: "Acting Our Age" a 1 p.m. Stories of Irja Friend and four other women. Jan. 6: Aurora Theater Director Barbara Oliver discusses: "Aspen Papers" at 1 p.m. and sign-up for free tickets follows. Jan. 7: Quintet: Classical Concert with Guest Musicians at 1:15 p.m. Jan. 8: Garden Folk Art Display: Ruth Perrine is going to talk about Garden Art at 11:45 a.m. Birthday Celebration Party at 1:15 p.m. for all the people who have birthdays in January. Entertainment and refreshments to follow. Jan. 9: Video: "Sistine Chapel" Pt. 1 at 1 p.m.

Cafe Crayon, 1309 Solano Ave. 527-4475. Wednesday nights: Free chess club for kids. Lessons by coach Robert Haines. Please bring a chess set. Second Tuesday of each month: Healthy Baby Workshops from 11 a.m.—12 p.m.

Cafe Europa, an intergenerational discussion group for Holocaust survivors and children of survivors will meet from 3-5 p.m. on the third Sunday of every month at the Berkeley Richmond Jewish Community Center, 1414 Walnut St. 704-7475.

Cal Postmasters meets every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. at 120 C Bechtel Hall, UC Berkeley campus.

City Crews will collect Christmas trees from the curb on normal recycling days from Jan. 8—14. 644-8856.

City of El Cerrito, 7007 Moers Ln. Jan. 8—Feb. 12: Children's Ballet on Wednesdays, 4—4:30 ages 3—5 years. 4:30—5 ages 5—10 years. \$42. Tap for Boys and Girls on Wednesdays. 5—5:30 ages 4—7 years. 5:30—6 ages 7—10 years. \$36. Jan. 9—30: Preschool Dance on Thursdays. 6—6:45. \$24. Jan. 4—Feb. 8: Ceramics for Youth Ages 5—14 on Saturdays. 9:30—11:30. \$45.70. 215-4371.

Contra Costa Hills Club, Jan. 2: Walk S.F.'s Waterfront from Ferry Bldg.

to Marina Green at 10 a.m. 415-753-2560. Jan. 5: Top of Mt. Tamalpais Loop Hike from West to East Peak. 529-2084.

Free Dance Classes for children K—6th graders. Tuesdays: International Folk Dance at Live Oak Recreation Center. 644-8513. Mondays: African Drumming/Dance. 644-8515.

The East Bay Collectors Club, which is for those interested in stamp collecting, postal history and all related matters, meets from 7:30-9 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at Kensington Recreation Center. 465-6266 or 526-5397.

Easy Going Travel Shop and Bookstore, 1385 Shattuck Ave. 843-3533. Jan. 6: Monique Bergerhoff Mulder, editor, and Ronald E. Cole, writer, *I've Been Gone Too Long: Field Trip Fiascoes and Expedition Disasters*. **Gaia Bookstore**, 1400 Shattuck Ave. 548-4172. Events are \$3 and at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise listed. Jan. 7: Rachel

Naomi Remen, *Kitchen Table Wisdom*. Jan. 9: Deepak Chopra, *The Path to Love: Creating a Passionate Life*.

Grooming Maintenance and Health Seminar will be held Jan. 5 at Dog's Best Friend and The Cat's Meow, 525 San Pablo Ave. 526-7762.

Holiday Soccer/Sports Camp will be held Jan. 2, 3 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Castro Park and Clubhouse. Weekly fee: \$77. Sponsored by the City of El Cerrito, 7007 Moers Ln.

Israeli folk dancing 8 to midnight, Wednesdays at El Cerrito Veteran Building, 6401 Stockton, El Cerrito. 231-0959.

Kensington 55+ Activity Center, open Thursdays, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Arlington Community Church, 52 Arlington Ave., Kensington. 526-9146. Jan. 2: "On The Wall, In The Mind and Through The Heart." Dorothy McCall gives a personal perspective of art and the Scandinavian immigrant experience. Red Cross blood pressure check available from 9—

11 a.m. Jan. 9: China. Jackie Hetman shows Part 1 of her slides on this country.

KPFA Radio needs volunteers to answer phones during their Winter Fund Drive, Jan. 29—Feb. 12. Groups, individuals welcome. Raffle drawing, breakfast/dinner provided. 848-6767 Ext. 400.

Lawrence Hall of Science, Centennial Drive below Grizzly Peak Blvd. 642-5132. Saturdays and Sundays: Holt Planetarium at 1, 2:15 and 2:30 p.m. \$2 per ticket. Saturdays: Computer Lab at 1, 2:15 and 2:30 p.m. \$5 per adult/child team. Recommended for children 5 and up. Free stargazing from 8 to 11 p.m.

Through Jan. 19: "Brain Games," a colorful, interactive exhibition featuring games designed to stimulate your mind. Jan. 2: Science Film Festival. Through Jan. 3: Biology Discovery Lab. Through March 16: *Find That Comet!* (1 p.m.); *Moons of the Solar System* (2:15 p.m.); *Constellations Tonight* (3:30 p.m.) at Holt Planetarium.

Nyngma Institute, 1815 Highland Place, Berkeley. 843-6812. Jan. 5: Lecture: "The Tibetan Mandala as a Map of Consciousness" from 6—7 p.m.

Pacific Film Archive, 2625 D Ave. Sixth Children's International Festival. Jan. 5: *A Wind in the Willow*. 3:30 p.m.

REI, 1338 San Pablo Ave. 527-4330. Jan. 9: Snowcamping 101 at 7 p.m. **Riverrun Poets** present "Poetry the B.A.C." on Tuesdays from 7—9 at the Berkeley Art Center, 1075 W. between Rose and Euclid, in Live Park. Jan. 7: Tim Nuveen.

See GOINGS ON, page



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Requirements for staff are high here and all hold bachelors and/or masters degrees. With a lower student/teacher ratio than required by the state, programs have been

designed to provide personalized attention with small groups of children.

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Hours are flexible to accommodate differing schedules, and the program is open to children ranging from six weeks to five years old. The infant room is spotless and cheerful, holding up to ten in comfortable cribs. All rooms, including those holding the babies, can be viewed from outside.

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Doctor Carter and his staff are

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For information on the Business Focus, call Advertising at 339-4030.

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El Cerrito Chamber of Commerce**Boblitt elected chamber president**June Boblitt, owner of full
Circle Travel has been elected
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Cerrito Chamber of Commerce.Serving with her will be
Larry Sanchez, Marvin Collins
Construction Co., first vice
president; Bill Kerber, Freeway
Motel, second vice pres.;
Charlie Weaver, secretary/treasurer; and Pat Malialua, past
president.Re-elected members of the
board of directors are Very
Boyovich, California Federal
Bank; Marvin Collins, Collins
Property Management; Jack
Freethy, El Cerrito Mill and
Lumber; Harry Kiefer, Kiefer
Furniture; Boblitt, Kerber,

Malialua and Sanchez.

Installation will be held Jan.
27.Many thanks to Joe Pena,
Allan Essex, Wil Chun, or also
running for the board.All in attendance enjoyed the
gathering for the holiday buffet
at the Cerrito City Club on on
Dec. 20. The board of directors
election results were announced
by Michael Klinger, committee
chair, and the executive board

election held.

The annual opportunity
drawing was held with
appreciation to those donating
prizes, as follows; Bob Liest,
FOODSCO, gift order; Harry
Kiefer, KIEFERS, clock; Rena
Bruton, BANK OF THE WEST,
plush bears; John Scalet,
PAYLESS, plush bear; Philip
and Ginger Chang.

See CHAMBER on page 16



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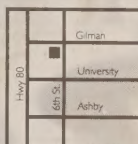
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AUTO SALES AND SERVICES

A Feature of the Advertising Department

Out of Gas...



by Karen Senzig

It's a brand new spanking year we're facing, (although the '97 models are already aged at three months), and I figured it was time to take stock of what I've learned new about cars in 1996. Of course, I am not counting all the interviews and stories that have come my way. No, I mean the stuff that comes the hard way as our aging '88

Jetta GLI and ancient '80 Mazda 626 continue to break down.

I discovered many things about tires as I shopped for a new set of 4 for the Jetta. I now know that the size of the tire can affect your speedometer reading, that a high performance car needs a high performance tire and when my father in law offered to buy us the tires for our anniversary this year—that the best deals were in Southern California (South Orange County), but of course we had to drive down there to get them.

Water Pumps are no longer a mystery as we replaced them both in the Jetta and the Mazda at nearly the same time. Our mechanic had warned us initially that there was probably 100 miles left on the Jetta's and we were able to nurse it over 1500 miles before I was adding water every ten

miles or so. I also found that next to replacing a broken axle and a new clutch, a water pump is a very expensive repair—times 2.

"I think the most I've learned this year is that we ought to take both cars to a new car dealer and see what kind of deal I could get on a new car."

Batteries were big this year. We started the new year with a new battery for the Mazda

and promptly forgot which car we had put it in. We were therefore confused when in Reno at Thanksgiving this year after leaving the Jetta in a freezing garage for 5 days without starting it, we discovered a dead car. The AM driver told us that it was a pretty common occurrence for this time of year even for relatively new batteries, and as he gave us a jump, suggested we check our warrantee if it didn't hold a charge. We made it home just fine although there was a clicking noise that just about drove me nuts on the passenger side all the way home. We even stopped a couple of times with no problem. The next morning a dead Jetta meant that we most likely needed a new battery. Of course, that's when we found that the battery was indeed over it's 48 month warranty by, you guessed it, one

month. So, after buying another battery, we figured we'd be fine for another month...until the next morning the Jetta was dead again. What we didn't know was jumping the dead battery. Reno may have triggered a circuit breaker which drained the new battery or, as I know, the short could have been there before (but I distinctly don't remember clicking of the circuit breaker on the way up to Reno.) Our mechanic traced the short to the electronics in the passenger seat, fixed it and recharged our brand new battery.

I think the most I've learned this year is that we ought to take both cars to a new car dealer and see what kind of deal I could get on a new car. I want to wish all of our readers and advertisers very happy and safe 1997 and may all of your automotive adventures be good ones!

If you have a question, story tip to share, send it in care of Karen Senzig, to Hills Publications, 5707 Redwood Road, Oakland, CA. 94619. FAX it to (510) 339-3053 or E-MAIL to KSENZIG@AOL.COM

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El Cerrito's boys soccer team scoring (Chay)many goals

By John Gardella

Last year's El Cerrito High boys soccer team had trouble scoring. So much so, that it managed just three wins in Alameda-Contra Costa Athletic League play. What a difference a year makes. Or, more specifically, what a difference a year makes to Xongdeth Chaymany.

With the senior forward leading the team in total points, the Gauchos (5-2-1, 1-0-1 ACCAL)

are off to their best start in coach Fred Gonzalez's six-year tenure.

"Xongdeth has really come into his own," Gonzalez said. "Last year we didn't do much scoring. But this year, he is more focused, and with his great breakaway speed, we have been able to open it up."

Chaymany leads the team with 12 points, including a goal in each of the team's first two league games.

But in a team sport, it takes more than one player to equal success.

The Gauchos, however, are more

than a one-player team. EC dismantled Salesian last week, 5-0. It was the second time this season that the Gauchos shut out Salesian. The teams met once in the preseason with EC netting a 6-0 win.

In the teams' latest confrontation, four different EC players scored for the Gauchos.

The reason? A strong midfield.

Gonzalez makes up for a lack of great speed (except for Chaymany) by rotating six players, thus, keeping his charges fresh. Mark

Moschetti, Daniel Petersen, Alex Dragos, Jasper Berberian, Jabe Gray and Rigo Andrade all see time at the halfback positions.

"We are playing well because we are doing a lot better in the midfield," Gonzalez said. "I wanted a strong midfield so that it could set up plays for us while making sure the other team doesn't execute its plays against us."

Against Salesian last week, EC's strong midfield combined with an air-tight defense to make life diffi-

cult for the perennial soccer power.

"The defense played well," Gonzalez said. "But it was able to set up some strong off-side traps because of our midfield play."

But Gonzalez doesn't want his team to become complacent. The Gauchos can still use some fine-tuning (See Pilots, St. Joseph).

Against St. Joseph in the season opener, the Gauchos led, 3-2. But a series of missed assignments in the midfield allowed the Pilots to score. Just like that, a win turned into a tie.

"We have a ways to go," Gonzalez said. "We've had mental lapses where we allow the other team to get back in the game. We have to concentrate, so that we don't give other teams easy opportunities."

If the rest of the Gauchos remain focused to the task at hand, success may just be a Chaymany goal away.

EC plays next Wednesday against Berean Christian.

Jackets show talent but it's a mystery

By Mac Montandon

The Berkeley boys basketball team has frequently been described as young and talented. In several accounts of the Yellowjackets squad, those two adjectives have been paired more times than Bogart and Bacall.

Yet, for much of the season, the team itself seemed to ignore half of the equation entirely. The Jackets were as talented as they rode a five-game winning streak into last week, and improved their record to 8-3.

Though they are led by a couple of sophomores, guard Perry Pugh and forward Justin Davis, the Jackets played a controlled, efficient brand of ball during the streak. Why, the way they won a couple of close ones at the wire, you could almost describe their style as mature.

Then, just last Saturday, insatiable youth finally showed up. Berkeley lost a tight one at home to El Cerrito, 48-42, as Davis was in early foul trouble and couldn't manage a point against a Gauchos defense geared towards putting the clamps on the Berkeley inside game.

Perhaps Davis' two first-quarter fouls could be attributed to that age-tested fall guy, the learning process, but isn't that what makes life exciting, even as it makes coaches prematurely grey?

These Jackets often excel at causing excitement, with Pugh streaking in the open court, Marcus Cole handling the ball on a taught string, and Davis and Josh Jackson finishing inside.

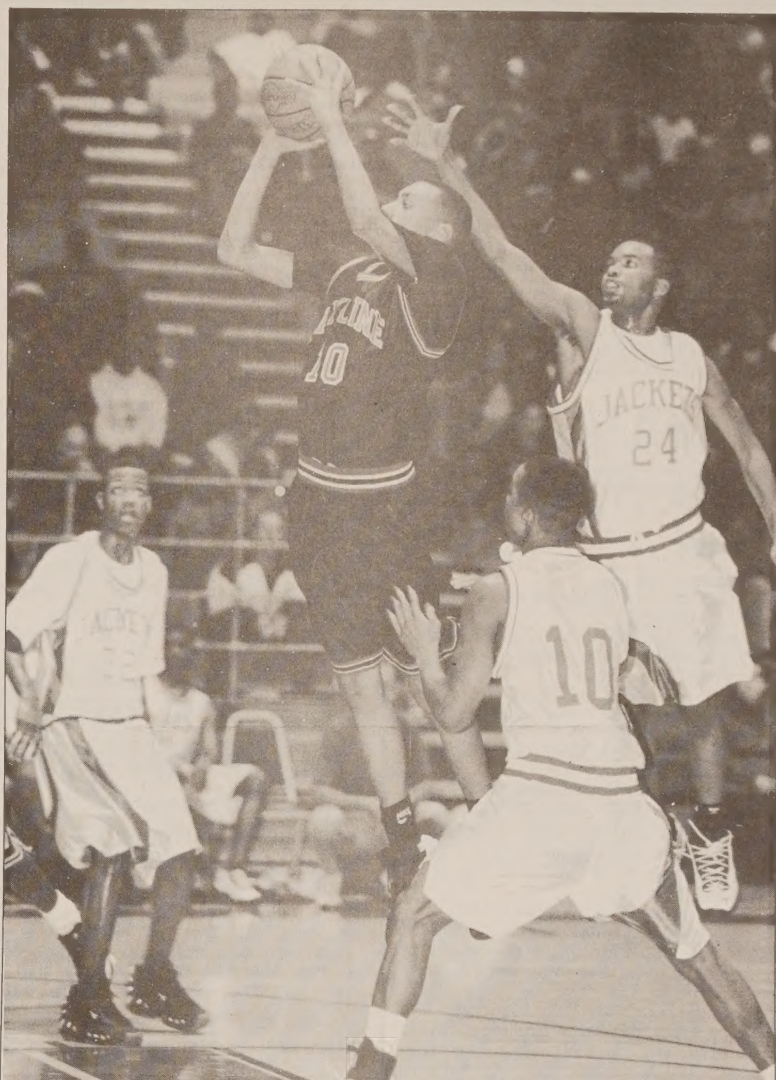
Coach Dan Palley knows it's better to be young and talented than simply young, even if that means enduring frustrating games like the one Saturday.

"We certainly had a height advantage that we didn't utilize," Palley said. "I don't think it (the EC game) was so much what they did, Justin (Davis) just got those two quick fouls. As a whole the team was not playing as well as they can, but give El Cerrito credit, their quickness got them easy baskets in transition. They did a good job on our big guys. Sometimes you can't put your finger on why you play a certain way."

Even a room full of aspiring hand models would have had a tough time putting a finger on Monday afternoon's home game against Liberty (1-7).

An already sloppy game turned aesthetically brutal when Pugh and Davis left it midway through the second quarter after colliding on the press. Davis needed stitches to close a cut on his hip, and Pugh suffered a badly sprained right ankle.

Of the two injuries, Pugh's was more severe, and his status for Thursday's opener of the St. Ignatius



Young, but talented Jackets D'Marcus Thompson (No. 32), Marcus Cole (No. 24), and Charles Butler (No. 10), show swarming defense in a recent game.

Tournament against Burton (San Francisco) is uncertain.

With their two leading scorers down, the Jackets turned to another sophomore, D'Marcus Thompson, to finish off an undersized Liberty team, 57-37.

Thompson scored all of his game-high 11 points in

the second half on a variety of jumpers and twisting, flying plays around the goal.

Thompson's game helped his team improve to 9-4, and lent some encouragement to the idea that Berkeley might just tie up this year's East Bay Athletic League title as neatly as Sam Spade solving a case.

Young SM looks to step up — next season

By John Gardella

As the St. Mary's High boys basketball team hovers at the .500 mark, its coach struggles to understand how a talented, albeit, young team, can lose games he believes the Panthers should win.

"We've lost to Serra twice, to Miramonte, to Livermore," coach Jose Caraballo said Monday after his team's lackadaisical performance against Novato. "Those are games we definitely should have won." The Division IV Panthers beat Novato, 57-47, evening their preseason record at 6-6. That mark is a two-game improvement from this time last season when Caraballo was a first-year varsity coach.

However, the increase in wins has not satiated Caraballo's appetite for improvement — even if Novato is the only Division IV team SM has played. Every other school the Panthers have faced has been a higher division opponent.

"I schedule higher division teams because I intend to play up a division in the near future," Caraballo said. Although a school can't play down a division (the division a school plays in depends on its student population), it can petition to play at a higher division.

An example is St. Joseph High, which has a small student population, but plays Division I basketball.

"We'll play a Division IV team like Novato because that's who we have to play in the North Coast Section playoffs," Caraballo said. "But I think we have so much more talent."

But even against a team with clearly less talent, the Panthers struggled. At one point, SM had just a two-point lead against Novato before pulling out the 10-point win.

That the crime is poor-decision making, and that the culprits are Caraballo's senior players, is what has the coach distressed.

"Our freshmen and sophomores have played really well," he said. "But the seniors are the ones making the bad decisions down the stretch."

If Caraballo, who sharpened his coaching acumen as an assistant at St. Joe, can take any solace from this preseason, it's that his stable of young players make the Panthers a future powerhouse.

Last Friday, in a semifinals win at the Livermore Tournament, freshman Billy Heidi hit a clutch 3-pointer in overtime while sophomore Marlin White-Kelly was 4-for-4 from the free throw line as the Panthers beat Irvington by five.

The following night, White-Kelly scored a game-high 21 points in the championship loss to Livermore. He and senior Daniel Shaw were all-tournament selections.

Oftimes, Caraballo has freshmen Heidi, Eddie Smith and Kellen Dixon, and sophomore White-Kelly on the court at the same time. But late in games, Caraballo pulls the youngsters, not because of a lack of fate, but because he doesn't want all the pressure heaped upon such young shoulders.

Heidi and Smith should team up to be the ACCAL backcourt of the future. Dixon and White-Kelly have the talent to anchor a formidable frontcourt. For now, however, Caraballo must mix two parts coaching with one part psychology, taking care not to damage his young charges.

"If one of them should make a serious mistake, it could be really damaging to their psyche," the coach said. "I try not to have them all out there in crunch time."

Therein lies Caraballo's catch-22. He won't play his best players down the stretch, but he can't seem to win without them.

The Panthers face their most daunting test tomorrow as they host the Dean Woodson Memorial Classic. Their opponent is Fremont, perhaps the top team in Northern California. With bookend forwards Jules Milstead and Marcus Malone and guard De'Undrae Pertecete, the Tigers have the potential to reach the Division I state final.

"Fremont is so good," Caraballo said. "I know the freshmen will get rattled, but it will be great for them. The bottom line is that if we play real smart and control the tempo, Fremont can be beat."

If not this season, then one or two down the line.

Boys Basketball

St. Mary's
57
Novato
47

Underdog AHS: Not roadkill — yet

By Mac Montandon

Suddenly, the Albany boys basketball team's road to surpassing last season's win total is filled with potholes and road blocks.

Two weeks ago, the Cougars were 4-5, and their chances of bettering last year's 4-22 mark seemed as slim as Santa's cheeks.

After three straight losses, however, Albany's opportunities for a win are growing fewer and harder to come by.

The Cougars had an excellent shot at win No. 5 last Friday at Lincoln of San Francisco (7-8), but a 21-12 fourth quarter burst by Lincoln secured the 65-56 win.

That's certainly a trusty formula for success, but it came as a bit of a surprise in this ballgame because Lincoln was 0-3 from the line prior to the last period.

Forwards Tony Hernandez and key Spencer accounted for 40 of the Cougars' points. Hernandez was significant in going for 25 on 10-18 shooting. Spencer had one of the better all-round games, scoring

15 points to complement his four assists and six rebounds.

The loss was particularly frustrating for Kagawa's squad because it came against one of the few teams the Cougars can match in the state. In its Alameda-Contra Costa Athletic League games, Albany routinely gives away several inches at each position.

Kagawa is hoping his team can make a good showing in this weekend's Alhambra Tournament.

The games will be Albany's last three before its league season starts on Jan. 10, at Richmond.

The Cougars will play the hosts on Thursday in the first round at 7:30 p.m., in the new Alhambra gym. Kagawa recognizes that once league play begins, opportunities for wins could dwindle in a very strong ACCAL.

"We're still thinking we can play well enough to break into the (ACCAL) playoffs," Kagawa said. "It will be tough, though. It's going to be very competitive in the league this year, we'll be going into every game as underdogs."



File '96 Jeff Lindquist
Marcus Malone, center, will lead Fremont into St. Mary's Friday to play the Panthers in the Dean Woodson Tournament.

Dean Woodson Basketball Tournament at St. Mary's

Jan. 3 & 4

6:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.

Fremont vs. St. Mary's
Monte Vista vs. Oakland



Catch-22: When was the last time you checked your parking meter to make sure you were actually getting all the time you paid for?

I've been noticing lately that when you put in a quarter you don't always get 20 minutes. Sometimes you get as little as five.

But you know how it is: Life is too busy to complain about every little glitch. I usually just put in a few more coins and forget about it.

But sometimes it can be more than an annoyance. Take the case of Lisa Klug. She's a freelance writer and a solid citizen. (She organized a drive at her synagogue, Beth Israel, to collect toiletries to give to the homeless.) And she's certainly no scowflaw.

Last July 31st at precisely 12:30 p.m. she parked on Durant and put two quarters in the meter. That should have bought her 40 minutes.

But when she got back 40 minutes later, she found a \$20 parking ticket on her windshield. The time: 12:35 — just five minutes after she put the money in.

So she fired off a letter to the city's Parking Division, explaining what happened and asking them to get back to her if there was any problem.

A month went by without a reply. Then two months, then three and four and five.

Finally, a few weeks ago, she was clearing up all her paperwork from the past year, and she realized she still hadn't heard from them.

Most people would simply let it go at that, but — good citizen that she is — Klug called the Parking Division to make sure everything was OK.

Imagine her shock when she was told that not only was everything *not* OK, her ticket had been raised to \$73 due to late fees!

"But I never got a letter from you!" she protested.

"Prove it," she was told.

How can you prove a negative? It's a logical impossibility. But she gamely worked her way up the bureaucratic ladder, trying to find somebody with a little common sense.

She ended up talking to Karen Moore, the head of the department, who dismissed her with the words, "How do I know you're telling the truth?"

I have two questions about this:

1. Is this any way to treat a citizen? To imply Klug was lying just adds insult to injury.
2. Has this kind of parking meter snafu ever happened to you? The issue goes way beyond Klug's Kafakaesque experience. If the city's meters are systematically shortchanging us, the powers-that-be need to know. Send me your parking meter horror stories, and I'll pass them along to the appropriate authorities.

P.S. I repeatedly called Karen Moore to get her side of the story, but she never returned my calls.

P.P.S. At last report, the city relented just a bit and told Klug that if she can't afford to pay the \$73, they'll let her work it off by doing community service! So if you see her in an orange vest, raking leaves by the freeway, wave to her and say hi.

...

Never Mind! Query from Emily Litella: "What's this I hear about introducing ebola into the public schools? Haven't we got enough problems with cancer and AIDS?"

Just kidding, folks. (*Pace*, Gilda Radner.) What I'm trying to say is that this controversy has generated more heat and less light than anything in recent memory. And it's hard to tell what the Oakland School Board's policy really is, because they keep issuing contradictory statements.

My suggestion is that we all back off and calm down. This is not the end of Western civilization.

To white folks who are worried that their kids will learn how to "talk black," you're too late. Your kids *already* want to talk like Snoopy Doggy Dog. It's what's cool. And they don't need the schools to teach them how.

Moreover, it's always been this way. When I was young we all wanted to sound "hip," so we appropriated black phrases like "Right on." (Even Richard Nixon said, "Sock it to me!")

In fact, blacks have been enriching white speech patterns since the dawn of the republic. Where do you think those Southern slave masters got their drawl? Robert MacNeill's *The Story of English* makes a convincing case that they learned it from their slaves.

So if Oakland's new policy is simply a statement that they won't punish black kids for saying "I be going," then I say — if you'll allow me — "Right on."

On the other hand, if the board is telling kids that they don't have to bother learning standard English, then I join Maya Angelou and Kweisi Mfume in protest.

You can speak ebonics on the playground if you want, but if you want to grow up to be a doctor or a lawyer or even an airplane pilot for Nigerian Airlines, you'll have to use the Queen's English.

And I ain't just woofin'.

Martin Snapp's column appears every Thursday in *The Journal*. Write Martin c/o Hills Newspapers, 5707 Redwood Rd., Oakland 94619, phone him at 273-9039; or e-mail him at Snapp@BMUG.org, Catman1@creative.net, or Catman666@aol.com

Park

Continued from front page
added bonus to the deal.

"Catellus should be complimented for their willingness to compromise," Steele said.

Ground breaking ceremonies are still a ways off, however, as the level of toxic remediations, and most importantly, who will pay for them, have yet to be worked out. According to Stana Hearn, executive director for CESP, problem areas include the heavy-metal laden crescent as well as the plateau in Albany. The Regional Water Quality Control Board will also have to approve the clean up, Hearn said.

Park district board member Jean Siri, whose ward encompasses the stretch of shoreline, was a bit less

Cardroom

Continued from front page
the possibility of Ladbroke being somewhat less than thrilled if the council lets the cardroom project die before the lawsuit is settled. Ladbroke has spent more than \$650,000 fighting the suit, which is currently on appeal. Although a lawsuit by Ladbroke against the city has not been threatened, Zweben said that should the council scotch the deal, "It would be understandable for them to have some misgivings."

"The city has a responsibility to defend, in a meaningful way, that voter approval," said Zweben, who added that, should the council refuse to do so, "That would be a perverse form of what I would call justice."

Regardless of the many possible twists the lawsuit could take, perhaps the supreme irony is that Good now finds himself in the somewhat strange position of

Budget

Continued from front page
lenging the utility users tax. The transfer tax case should be heard in February.

El Cerrito obtained \$384,000 from its own property transfer tax in 1995-96, representing \$7 for every \$1,000. If the tax is overturned, the city would lose about \$350,000, and "significant" adjustments would have to be made.

The whole revenue would not be lost, because a \$.55 per 1,000 square foot fee formerly distributed to the city by Contra Costa County would be restored. Thus the sale of a \$100,000 home, which would now generate \$700 for the city, would generate just \$55.

Neat

Continued from front page
Technical information is also made available through literature and training.

Be prepared. The latest disaster preparedness information recommends stocking enough supplies for your household for 72 hours at minimum, for example. This means water (at least one gallon per person per day; the water should be changed every six months), food, tools and blankets. Pets should also be planned for.

Learn how to respond. To that end, the program provides training sessions.

"We take people through a number of skills and train them in what to do," said Cafel. "These include disaster medicine, search and rescue, damage assessment, safety and security (the latter includes practical items, like putting out fires, roping off hazards and turning off gas mains).

"We train with the fire department on vital skills," she said. "It's been shown in other disasters in other parts of the world that having those skills really does improve your chances of survival and will minimize serious injuries."

Knowledge of proper response has increased with each earthquake. Cafel said, for example, that it is no longer recommended to stand under doorways in an earthquake. Instead, she said, "duck, cover and hold" under something solid and sturdy is the rule.

In addition, it has been learned that cuts from broken glass are both common and life-threatening after an earthquake. NEAT participants learn to keep shoes by their beds and to put them on first, as well as to prevent serious problems by moving beds away from windows.

The NEAT program, in fact, emphasizes many preventative activities, from retrofitting to strapping water heaters and heavy furniture to wall studs.

DD

In a disaster, a NEAT group will assemble at a pre-designated "command post" in the neighborhood, where each person will be assigned to simple tasks. Neighbors will look for Help/Okay signs in windows. "Okay" indicates that the members of the household are in good shape. "Help," or no sign at all, indicates that assistance may be needed. Group members will also know which houses have special needs — handicapped residents, for example, or young children.

Since the community's communication systems may be overwhelmed — or phone lines down — the NEAT program enlists a number of ham radio operators, creating a network of communicators with the city's central Emergency Operations Center.

"Those trained persons will get the neighborhoods' information to the EOC, so urgent cases may receive outside assistance."

Still, NEAT is organized on the premise that professional services may not be available for every problem — even serious ones.

"We need to know what we can do in our own neighborhoods, since there may be a period of time when we're completely on our own," said Cafel. "We will need the experience, the knowledge and the resources to cope."

Currently, the NEAT steering committee is planning what it hopes will be the first annual drill for the city. Many Bay Area communities, including Albany, plan to do the same on Saturday, April 12. Most neighborhoods will conduct a "tabletop drill" that day, but organizers hope someday to organize field drills in El Cerrito and Kensington. Neighborhood captains are being trained in advance for the drill.

In all the preparations, said Cafel, the emphasis is on the life-affirming nature of preparedness.

"We don't see it as a scary, negative thing," she said. "It's a hard way to motivate yourself. Instead, we say,

optimistic than some.

"It's pretty tentative, I'll tell you," she said Friday, pointing to former industrial sites in Emeryville, among others, as obstacles to the deal going through.

"That's a nasty piece of shoreline, really," Siri said, qualifying the comment by adding: "It's a wonderful piece of shoreline that's been abused."

Former Assemblyman Tom Bates, a point man for the project since the 1970s, put a somewhat different spin on the situation. "Tell (Siri) she's now an owner," Bates said within a few hours of the Public Works Board's vote.

"I'm planning on jogging on it, running on it, and playing ball with my grandchildren on it," said a rather elated Bates. He also pointed to the approximately \$15

upholding a vote which he opposed in the first place. Hence Robert's Rules of Order, written 100 years ago by Brigadier General Henry Martyn Robert, one of which Good carries in his pocket.

"The great lesson for democracies to learn is for the majority to give the minority a full, free opportunity to present their side of the case, and then for the minority, having failed to win a majority to their views, gracefully to submit and to recognize the action as that of the entire organization, and cheerfully to assist in carrying it out, until they can secure it's repeal," says the rule.

Although such a view might be far from the reality of the ongoing debate, like it or not, it is the one Good says he will take. Opponents, who have certainly not submitted, point to the inaccurate budget projections

"The other thing that will affect us is the Pacific Development Group project for next year," Randall said. "That's more of a concern to me now."

The proposed PDG shopping center is behind schedule. Sales revenues from the project had already been assumed for 1997/98 in a preliminary two-year projected budget.

"We're not in a catastrophic position for next year, but we will have to reduce contracts," Randall said. "People want major things done that we won't be able to do."

Randall believes the community should be involved in a capital investment program to discuss such issues

million in bond money left over for building parks, lands, and shrugged off the possible clean up problems, saying "if worse comes to worse we could clean it up ourselves."

The land, valued at one time at \$100 million, was made significantly cheaper by zoning changes in Berkeley, Emeryville and Albany, Bates said, and was once the subject of a lawsuit between Berkeley and Catellus which made it all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

After working "like crazy" during his many years in the state assembly to make the dream a reality, Bates cited Monday as a day to rejoice.

"Today, we just added a jewel to (the park district) property," Bates said. "I plan on enjoying it until I die."

which were the main selling point for the cardroom. While Thomsen, who says she is keeping her mind open as to how she will vote at the next hearing, points to a lack of public support for the project she encountered during her campaign, Good says that as far as is concerned, the only reliable poll of city residents was taken in 1994.

"I'm not there to destroy the cardroom without going to the people. That would be wrong," Good said. And if the permitted delay does not turn out to be a viable avenue?

"Then I'll have to sit back and think about what my options are."

The second hearing will be held Monday, Jan. 6, 8 p.m. at City Hall, contrary to an earlier announcement that the meeting would be held in the library.

as repair of the community pool and needed upgrading of the public safety building. Such community discussions might result in a new measure on the November ballot, he said.

As far as Randall is concerned, "it would be very short-sighted of the city to try to balance its budget by deferring needed maintenance."

"We need to continue to provide maintenance for the quality city services the public expects," he said. "The challenge is to be able to include those items in the budget in the next few years under the city's current fiscal restraints."

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